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Senate

The Senate met at 2 p.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Immortal, invisible, God only wise, in light inaccessible You are hidden from our eyes. We are grateful that we can turn to You throughout life's seasons, for You are the source of our hope for the years to come.

Lord, in a world of change and decay, You remain the same yesterday, today, and forever. Strengthen our lawmakers with Your Spirit and inspire them with Your precepts. May they always place their confidence in You, for Your steadfast love and faithfulness sustain us.

Undergird America with a foundation of right living that exalts a nation, as You deliver us from the evils that bring national decline. Surround us all with the shield of Your Divine favor.

We pray in Your sacred Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COTTON). The Democratic leader is recognized.

OBAMACARE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, this is another day and another report highlighting how ObamaCare is helping Americans.

Today's proof comes from a Gallup poll which finds that 9 out of 10 Americans report having health insurance.

Here are a few excerpts from the Associated Press article about this poll: "... underlining a change across the nation, nearly 9 out of 10 adults now say they have health insurance, according to an extensive survey released today."

The Gallup poll "found that the share of adults who lack [health] insurance dropped to 11.9 percent for the first three months of this year, the lowest level since the survey began its tracking in 2008."

Coverage gains from 2014–2015 translate to about 3.6 million fewer adults uninsured since the fall. . . . "The Affordable Care Act had three major objectives: increase coverage, slow the rate of increase in costs, and improve health". . . . "The first one is a clear win. Coverage is increasing; there is no question about it."

"On balance, an estimated 14.75 million adults have gained coverage since the fall of 2013, when the law's first open enrollment season was about to begin."

The survey also found that "Hispanics saw the biggest coverage gains of any ethnic or racial group. At a time when Republicans are very keenly trying to court the Hispanic vote, a large chunk of Hispanics are gaining insurance via the Affordable Care Act."

Recent gains in coverage have benefited people up and down the income ladder. But the most notable improvement has been among those making less than \$36,000 a year, a group that traditionally struggled to get and keep health insurance.

Here is a little short comment on this. When we have people who make less than \$36,000 getting insurance coverage, it saves us money. They are not having to go through their primary care physician—which is an emergency room—the highest cost of health care delivery in the United States. So this is really good news for America. ObamaCare is working, and there is more and more evidence every day. It

is time to stop trying to destroy the law that has been helping millions and millions of Americans.

LYNCH NOMINATION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, let's talk a little bit about Loretta Lynch. We have now passed the first 100 days of the Republican-controlled Senate. We all remember the lofty promises made by the Republican leader and his party when they assumed power. But we are still struggling to finish two issues that should have been resolved weeks ago.

The Democrats are ready to move forward on the Lynch nomination and the so-called doc fix. This doc fix, which we are going to talk about a little later, is so important not only for the doctors but also for their patients. Medicare is an important part of our health care delivery system, and it benefits older Americans.

This day marks the 157th day since President Obama first nominated Loretta Lynch as Attorney General. For more than 5 months, Democrats have been ready to take up and confirm the nomination. Back in November of last year, when Loretta Lynch was first nominated, the Republican leader said: "Ms. Lynch will receive fair consideration by the Senate. And her nomination should be considered in the new Congress through regular order."

I am not making this up. This is what the Republican leader said. I quoted him verbatim.

Even though the Democrats were ready to move the nomination before the elections, some Republicans wanted a little more time to look at it. We agreed to that. We based this upon what the Republican leader said—that Ms. Lynch would receive fair consideration by the Senate.

Well, that hasn't happened. January came and went, and Loretta Lynch's nomination never got a confirmation vote on the floor. Democrats were

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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